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ABSTRACT

Primary focus in this 1977 annual report of the Houston Public Library system is the library's nine-month program, "City...Our Urban Past, Present and Future," which was funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Aspects of the first four months of the program that are described include its lecture series, exhibits, reading guides, media coverage, and gala celebration. In addition, some of the more unusual library programs during the year are noted particularly its birthday party, Valentine Special, and Midsummer Eve Festival. Innovative and growth aspects of the library's other services and programs are briefly presented in three areas: branches, technical services, and Central Library. Of particular mention are special services--Books By Mail, The Neighborhood Information Service, and the multiservice project; automated conversion changes; and publicity. Comparative statistics for 1976 and 1977, covering borrowers, use of library materials, book stock, finances, and personnel are also included, as well as a directory and map of the branches in the Houston Public Library system. (JD)

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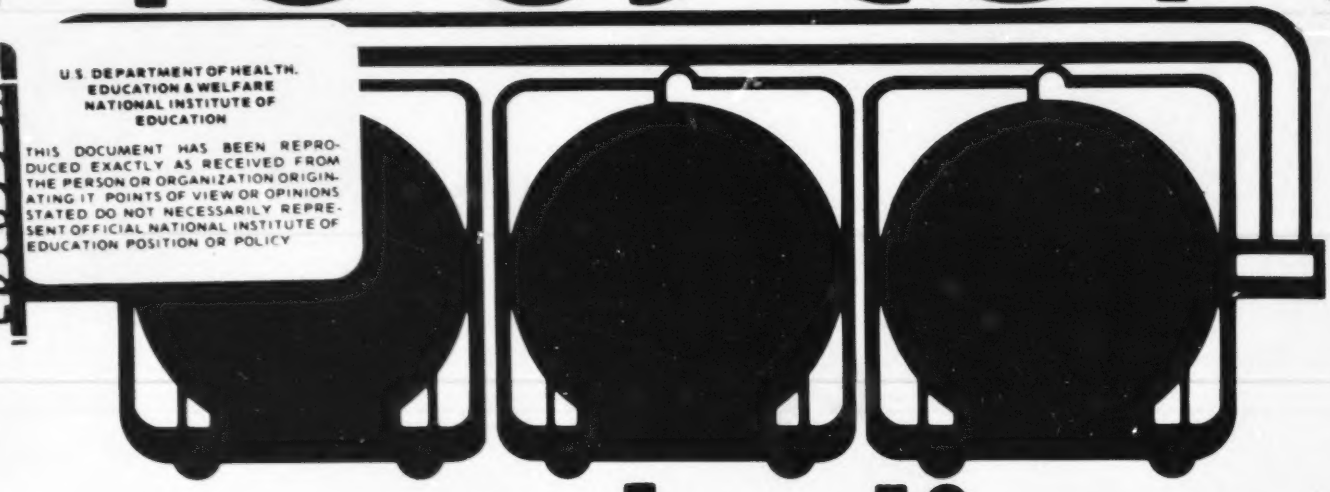
houston public libraries



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Homer L. Ford
Frank O. Mancuso

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Frank E. Mann
Johnny Goyen

CONTROLLER
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Henry E. Kriegel

TREASURER
Henry E. Kriegel

1978 CITY OFFICIALS

MAYOR
Jim McConn

DISTRICT COUNCILMEN
Larry McKaskle
Judson W. Robinson, Jr.
Louis Macey
Homer L. Ford
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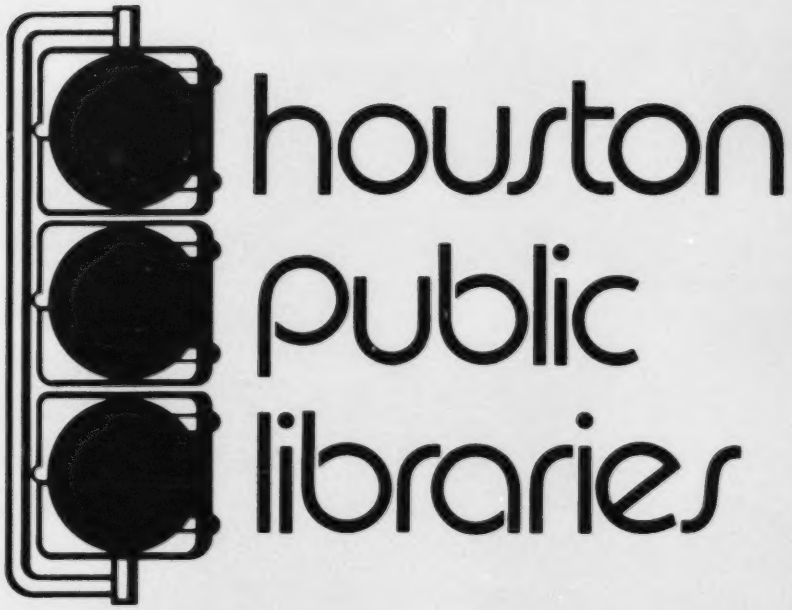
houston
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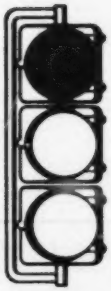
CITY!

OUR URBAN PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

PRESENTED BY
THE HOUSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
AND MADE POSSIBLE BY
A GRANT FROM
THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT
FOR THE HUMANITIES



HOUSTON DID STOP AND TAKE NOTICE OF A DYNAMIC PROGRAM CONCERNED WITH LIVING IN A CITY

"Your chances of meeting a villain here are good...but so too are your chances of meeting a poet." So starts the radio and television commercial describing the program that informs adult Houstonians about their city as an historical, social and cultural force. This program, designed to emphasize the good features of living in a city, invites participants to learn as much as possible about their city in order to deal better with its bad aspects.

The National Endowment for the Humanities granted the library $135,000 for this nine-month program which began in September and was entitled "City...Our Urban Past, Present and Future." A self-paced reading and learning program designed for adults, it used an informal approach to adult education through books, talks, films and exhibits. The thematic reading lists were drawn from the library's holdings in history, literature, architecture, religion, sociology and psychology. A series of eleven lectures on Houston and urban Americans featured scholars from Rice University, the University of Houston, the Institute of Religion and the University of Texas School of Public Health.

The program began with events that focused on history, psychology, religion and sociology and was supported by the first Urban Reader's Guide on these disciplines. Topics for the first series of talks by the dynamic Dr. Barry Kaplan of the University of Houston's Department of History were: "Houston: The Bayou Queen," "River Oaks: A Planned Elite Community," and "The American City: Where Are We Going?" These thought-provoking lectures as well as those of the other lecturing scholars were given at central library and three branches--Jungman, Smith and Kendall.

Two lecture topics by Dr. Daniel W. Martin of the School of Public Health related to sociology and were entitled, "The City: A Nice Place to Visit But I Wouldn't Want To Live There" and "The Urban Dweller: His Health and Ecology." Dr. Jerome Berryman of the Institute of Religion had a lecture entitled "The City of God and the City of Houston."

The second Urban Reader's Guide was devoted entirely to architecture. Mr. O. Jack Mitchell from Rice's School of Architecture also had three lectures: "The Changing Urban Pattern of American Cities," "Great American Cities: Their Urban Design and Architecture," and "Houston: A Great American City?"

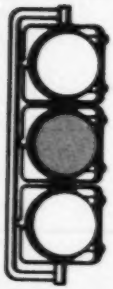
Two outstanding exhibits were mounted for this series: "Houston Neighborhoods" and "Designing the City." The latter was a display from the Finn Collection of Architectural Drawings by Alfred C. Finn, the prolific Houston architect.

Although the average attendance at these lectures was fifty persons, the groups were responsive, and lively discussions, questions and answers followed each talk. A form evaluating each program was completed by those attending. The response to the programs was enthusiastic. The evaluation sheets also brought out the broad educational background of those attending--from 5th grade to postgraduate.

The reading guides were popular throughout the system. The 15,000 copies of each were soon dispersed. Some 200 titles were included in these three reading guides and included a variety of books from the very basic to scholarly works. The guides were developed and annotated by Houston Public Library librarians working with local humanities scholars. Each book was carefully annotated in order for the reader to make intelligent selection of books within his interest. Each branch in the system as well as central library received a collection of all titles listed. The public use of these titles is yet to be determined when circulation statistics are compiled at the conclusion of the project in 1978.

The project had great appeal to Houstonians, due in great part to the excellent media coverage. Television commercials were developed and sent to all channels. Each radio station received taped commercials, over 120 bus cards were distributed and the newspapers were generous with coverage of all events.

The first four months of the "City!" project were an unqualified success.



HOUSTON DID GET READY FOR THE LIBRARY GALA BY GOING THROUGH ATTIC TRUNKS FOR CLOTHES OF YESTERYEAR

A celebration that put the Houston Public Library in the Social Spotlight was THE Gala held in recognition of the National Endowment for the Humanities Grant awarded the library for the "City!" project. The Library Board, The Friends of the Houston Public Library and Neiman-Marcus combined forces to present to Houstonians "an evening to reminisce" and "an evening to remember." This first major benefit for the library was a dinner dance and vintage style show. The dinner dance was held on the library plaza and the style show in the dramatic three-storied lobby--an exciting setting to show off the fashions of vintage dresses worn in earlier days by well known Houstonians and modeled at the Gala by descendants of these original owners. In sharp contrast to the vintage style show, Neiman-Marcus staged a showing of trendy dresses and a million dollars worth of unusual furs designed by internationally known Carla Fendi. The unplanned, unrehearsed third style show was put on by the guests themselves. Many came dressed in clothes from the past and this added to the fun and freshness of the occasion.

This splendid party was a sell-out and the $20,700 proceeds were donated to the library's Humanities Department.

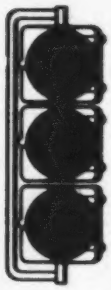
The nostalgic fashions, the candlelight, the delightful dinner and dancing on the plaza combined to make this a "Gala Success Story." The library staff and all Houstonians are deeply grateful to the Library Board and the Friends who made all of this possible.

AND HOUSTON DID GO TO THE MANY UNUSUAL LIBRARY PROGRAMS PRESENTED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Birthday, Valentine, Midsummer Eve were but a few of the unusual features the library presented for Houstonians to enjoy and to entice them into the library. The first birthday party of the new central library building on January 16 was a rousing celebration commemorating the first year of outstanding service. The Texas Brigade in full dress began the celebration with a gun salute on the plaza. The program included songs by the Texas Southern University Concert Choir and music by the Theater Men of Houston Baptist University, followed by a presentation of gifts from the Houston American Revolution Commission, the Friends of the Houston Public Library, and the Galleria Corporation. The finale was the presentation of a beautiful birthday cake donated by the Rice-Rittenhouse Hotel. A memorable time was had by more than 150 library patrons.

A second library activity that followed on the heels of the birthday party was the Valentine Special. Not to be outdone by the Texas Brigade, the Valentine Special began with two beautiful ladies arriving on the plaza in a horse-drawn antique coach and presenting bouquets of red and white roses to the Library Director and the Mayor Pro Tem. The program featured actors, dancers, musicians and poets. More than 175 patrons enjoyed this romantic Valentine interlude.

One of the most widely known festivals, Midsummer Eve, celebrates the summer solstice--the longest day of the year. The central library staged its second Midsummer Eve festival on the library plaza. It was an evening of fun and madness for children and adults. Family groups brought blankets, chairs, snacks and drinks and settled in for three hours of hilarity, nonsense music, drama and dance. The 300 spectators enjoyed modern music by Houston Jazz Society Band as well as ancient music played on the lute, harpsicord, krummhorn, ranket and antique bass guitar. The Renaissance Festival Dancers performed some morris dances, a new lyric composed just for the occasion was read by the poet, the Enchanted Forest Players presented a mummery, "The Song of Pigmiggen" and a buffoonery, "The Cock and the Fox."



ALL LIBRARY ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES WERE ON THE GO

Special features were not the only "movers and shakers" of the system's activities. There was steady progress and exciting innovation and obvious growth in all major areas.

BRANCHES

The more than steady progress was obvious in the reference services provided by the branches and the extension services. The total increase in branch reference was a healthy 38.1% with the adult reference up 39.8% and the juvenile reference up 32.8%. More Houstonians were getting answers to their questions regardless of whether they had to do with research or social needs.

Special service through the branch system was emphasized in 1977. Perhaps the most outstanding was the particularized library service at M. D. Anderson Hospital and Tumor Institute and Rehabilitation Annex. This service was made possible by a Title I Library Services and Construction Act Grant of $44,900. The grant was used to develop library service not only to the 25,000 patients who come and go during the year but also service to the family and friends who come with them. Because the hospital is an international one the library materials were purchased in many languages. These materials were serviced by one professional librarian and a corps of volunteers.

A continuing specialized service, Books By Mail, provided more reading and other library materials to Houstonians who are elderly, disabled, or shut-in as was indicated by a circulation increase of 32%.

The Neighborhood Information Service improved service to the public through the complete revision of the NIC Data File. Also, a new format was devised to facilitate and expedite the updating of this file as well as make it easier to use. The scope of the data was broadened to include not only social services but also educational, recreational and cultural information. The updated and expanded file was reproduced for all branches and central library.

The children experienced extraordinary service during the Summer Reading Program. They were encouraged to form the habit of reading as a leisure time activity and also they were made aware of the idea that riding buses is an important means of transportation in a large city. The reward for summer reading in 1977 was a free ride on a city bus. As a result, thousands of children rode buses, many for the first time. The Office of Public Transportation received many calls and letters inquiring about this program--most wanted to know how so much favorable publicity was received from an investment of a few thousand bus tokens. Reading, public transportation, and energy conservation was a powerful trio that demanded and received public attention.

The Houston Community College and the Houston Public Library engaged in a new cooperative effort developing a literacy program in the library. A small but special library of books and materials was set up in Oak Forest Branch for adults with literacy problems and their tutors. Other literacy collections were set up at Kashmere Gardens, Smith and Carnegie branches. Also, Moody Branch was designated by the Sam Houston Campus of the Houston Community College as their library resource center. In support of this cooperative project, branch hours of opening were increased from two to four evenings and the reference collection was expanded considerably.

The first branch in a multiservice complex was opened for service in October. Housed in 2,880 sq. ft. of the Fifth Ward Multiservice Center, the branch serves 32,790 citizens with library services, information and referral services and outreach services.

The multiservice concept was being planned to far greater depth and extent with the Near Northside Educational Complex. Cooperating in this project

were three separate institutions and departments, the Houston Public Library, the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, and the Houston Independent School District. Involved will be the Carnegie Branch, Jefferson Davis Senior High School and Marshall Junior High School. The plans include the remodeling and enlarging of the schools and the renovating or rebuilding of Carnegie Branch which will serve the schools as the school library as well as the community as a branch library. A park will be developed to serve both the schools and the community. This challenging and unique 135 million dollar community/educational complex will be funded through Public Library Bond funds and Community Development money.

Two branches were in the process of being renovated and rebuilt. The final plans for the renovation and expansion of Heights Branch were completed. The move to Merchants Park as temporary headquarters for Heights Branch was near completion with opening set for the first of the year. The renovated and enlarged building will preserve the existing aesthetic qualities of the present structure and yet provide for new and more functional spaces.

The Denver Harbor Branch was near completion at the close of the year. By City Council action this 6,500 sq. ft. facility was renamed Cliff A. Tuttle Branch. Its new location is in the Cliff Tuttle Park.

TECHNICAL SERVICES

Perhaps the greatest changes were made in the Technical Services Area where computerization and developing management of records and information consumed a large part of staff time. The Texas State Library awarded a $29,902 grant to establish the Houston Information Network and to pay for the conversion of the library's shelflist to machine readable form. The catalog will be produced on Computer-Output-Microfilm to be displayed on microfilm viewers. The grant also funds a study to be made of the use of this microfilm catalog in four pilot libraries of the Houston Community College and the Houston Independent School District. The key purpose of this project is to develop a more cost effective catalog that can be inexpensively reproduced for use in other Houston Institutions. The conversion

of the shelflist to machine readable form for the more than 300,000 titles owned by the library was 86% completed by the end of the year. All new cataloging was being done on the automated system which was found to be phenomenally timesaving. In 1977 there were 21,428 new book titles cataloged, an increase of 11% over 1976. Nonbook titles increased 25%.

Another step toward improved data handling was the installation of four remote data entry terminals by the Management Information Systems. These Entrex 280 terminals, connected by phone cable with the Computer Center, provide the library direct control over data entered with the purchasing and accounting system.

Planning toward the computerized circulation control system, with first-step implementation projected for 1978, final arrangements for new library cards and registration forms were made. Through the Houston Area Library System a grant of $155,000 was provided for this on-line circulation system, along with $161,878 in funds from the city. This system will extend throughout the Houston Area Library System including all branches of the Houston Public Library. The first phase of the project will provide installation of the system in the Central Library and four branches.

CENTRAL

As with the branches, steady progress was seen at Central Library with an increase in reference questions answered of 17% and an increase in circulation of 8%. Sundays were consistently very busy with an average circulation of 1,560 per day or 390 per hour.

Exceptional library publicity, exceptional library programs and exceptional service contributed to the increase in business. The publicity included a television commercial by John Henry Faulk that was very effective in promoting telephone reference service. An advertisement entitled "Does a Flea Blink?" was placed as a public service item in several national magazines. The cooperation of television and radio stations as well as the newspaper and local magazines was outstanding. Never a day passed that the library was not mentioned in the media.

Library programs that were previously a once per week project became almost a daily affair. Adult programs during the lunch hour, students in the morning, and children in the afternoon kept the club room so busy that scheduling became a problem. A Junior League Volunteer implemented a plan to bring seventh grade classes from the Houston Independent School District to the Central Library on a regularly scheduled basis. A slide program was planned to introduce these students to the many services and the service areas of the library followed by a tour of the library. These students were much more knowledgeable users of the library after this well coordinated introduction.

The lunch hour programs ranged from solar energy to belly dancing. These regularly scheduled programs brought a diversity of people, most of whom became regular library users. Special interest groups were attracted to the library through such exhibits as Hobbies Unlimited, with supporting programs, demonstrations and films. Increasing the use of leisure time was important to many Houstonians as was evidenced by the hundreds of people who viewed the exhibits and attended the programs. Each month saw a major exhibit accompanied by related programs. Among the most popular were "The World of Lewis Carroll," the first public showing of a private collection; "Star Trek," an exhibit of memorabilia from the popular television series with the "Houston 2000" series of seminars on the future of Houston which fit right into the exhibit theme; "The Third Dimension," a display of contemporary sculpture by 23 of the state's top sculptors; and "Women in Architecture," a traveling exhibit brought to Houston by the Rice Design Alliance as a part of the International Women's Year Conference.

Expanded and improved service was made possible in the area of archives through a $23,000 grant by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission to the Houston Metropolitan Research Center of the Houston Public Library. The grant was made for the continued employment of three graduate students and for the addition of a certified assistant archivist to the staff. Also received was a grant of $1,000 from the Hamman Foundation to aid in the preservation of the historical photograph collection. To assist with the development of the Houston Metropolitan Research Center an Advisory Board of ten distinguished scholars was appointed to provide the staff with

suggestions on what materials should be collected and to give input into the shaping of the Houston Metropolitan Research Center policy. The restoration of the Julia Ideson Building began in late fall. Funds of $3,268,436 for the restoration project were received from the Public Works Employment Act of 1977. The restored building will house the Houston Metropolitan Research Center.

1977 was a year of historical orientation for the library with genealogy becoming of even greater interest to young and old alike. The Bicentennial, "Roots," and Johnny Carson gave genealogy its great impetus in Houston resulting in such usage of the Clayton Library that it was strained to the limits--including the space, materials and staff. The most rewarding result was the increase of interest in family history by young people.

Each department of central experienced increased use and increased demands for materials and services. An example was the great usage of 16mm films which amounted to a significant 11,758 increase over 1976. The attendance figures at the showings of these films also had a 360,000 increase over 1976.

The second year of service in the new central building was as exciting and rewarding as the first with more people served and more people enjoying a building that is still the talk of the city.

COMPARATIVE STATISTICS 1977

	1977	1976
BORROWERS		
Adult	476,579	416,737
Juvenile	205,770	190,650
Total	682,349	607,387
USE OF LIBRARY MATERIALS		
Circulation		
Central Library	748,943	690,428
Branches	4,400,232	4,478,298
Total	5,149,175	5,168,726
Questions Answered		
Central Library	1,145,869	978,720
Branches	482,257	347,816
Total	1,628,126	1,326,536
Interlibrary Loans		
Volumes Lent	12,662	9,186
Volumes Borrowed	2,345	1,256
Total Transactions	15,007	10,442
BOOK STOCK		
Added		
Adult	131,473	126,167
Juvenile	52,754	62,030
Total	184,227	188,197
Withdrawn		
Adult	67,159	64,575
Juvenile	46,955	27,494
Total	114,114	92,069
Total Stock		
Adult	1,293,282	1,228,968
Juvenile	580,810	575,011
Total	1,874,092	1,803,979

	1977	1976
Additions by Sources		
Tax Funds	135,386	105,471
Bond Funds	3,307	14,620
Gifts and Endowments Funds	1,795	2,211
State Grants	24,707	22,232
Gift Books	9,495	7,589
Government Documents	16,206	21,746
Human Resources	4,388	--
FINANCES		
Budget		
Salaries	$5,377,794	$4,211,413
Materials	1,274,148	1,107,429
All Other Accounts	1,177,183	943,291
Total	$7,829,125	$6,262,133
Gifts and Endowment Income		
Endowments	$ 11,400	$11,953
Gifts	138,863	47,754
Total	$150,263	$59,707
Grants		
National Archives & Records Service	$ 22,768	--
Library Services & Construction Act	477,017	$530,110
Library Systems Act	457,188	209,893
National Endowment for Humanities	135,000	15,000
Total	$1,091,973	$755,003
PERSONNEL		
Professional	239	226
Nonprofessional	317	307
Maintenance	75	74
Total	631	607
MISCELLANEOUS STATISTICS		
Population 1,232,802		
Average Daily Circulation	15,844	15,928
Days Open	325	324½
Per Capita Circulation	4.176	4.19
Per Capita Income	$6.35	$5.08

HOUSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY DIRECTORY

CENTRAL LIBRARY
500 McKinney Avenue
224-5441

CLAYTON LIBRARY
(Center for Genealogical Research)
5300 Caroline Street
524-0101

ACRES HOMES BRANCH
8501 West Montgomery Road
448-9841

BRACEWELL BRANCH
10115 Kleckley Drive
941-3130

CARNEGIE BRANCH
1209 Henry Street
227-9177

DENVER HARBOR BRANCH
6402 Market Street
675-4656

DIXON BRANCH
8002 Hirsch Road
633-2147

FIFTH WARD BRANCH
4014 Market Street
236-0759

HEIGHTS BRANCH
921 North Shepherd
861-4149

HILLENDAHL BRANCH
2436 Gessner Street
467-9090

JOHNSON BRANCH
3511 Reed Road
733-1983

JUNGMAN BRANCH
5830 Westheimer Road
789-7211

KASHMERE GARDENS BRANCH
5411 Pardee Street
674-8461

KENDALL BRANCH
14330 Memorial Drive
497-3590

LAKEWOOD BRANCH
8815 Feland Street
633-3725

LOOSCAN BRANCH
2510 Willowick Drive
622-6525

MELCHER BRANCH
7200 Keller Street
641-5611

MEYER BRANCH
5005 West Bellfort Street
723-1630

MOODY BRANCH
9525 Irvington Boulevard
697-2745

OAK FOREST BRANCH
T349 West 43rd Street
688-2251

PARK PLACE BRANCH
8145 Park Place Boulevard
645-4183

PLEASANTVILLE BRANCH
1520 Gellhorn Street
676-0693

RING BRANCH
8835 Long Point Road
468-2643

SMITH BRANCH
3624 Scott Street
741-6220

STANAKER BRANCH
611 69th Street
923-8784

VINSON BRANCH
3100 West Fuqua Street
433-0356

WALTER BRANCH
7660 Clarewood Drive
771-5797

YOUNG BRANCH
6003 Beekman Road
643-8556

M. D. ANDERSON
792-7180

BOOKMOBILES
869-5161

BOOKS BY MAIL
869-0218

CHILDREN'S CAROUSEL
869-1307

INSTITUTIONAL SERVICES
869-9046

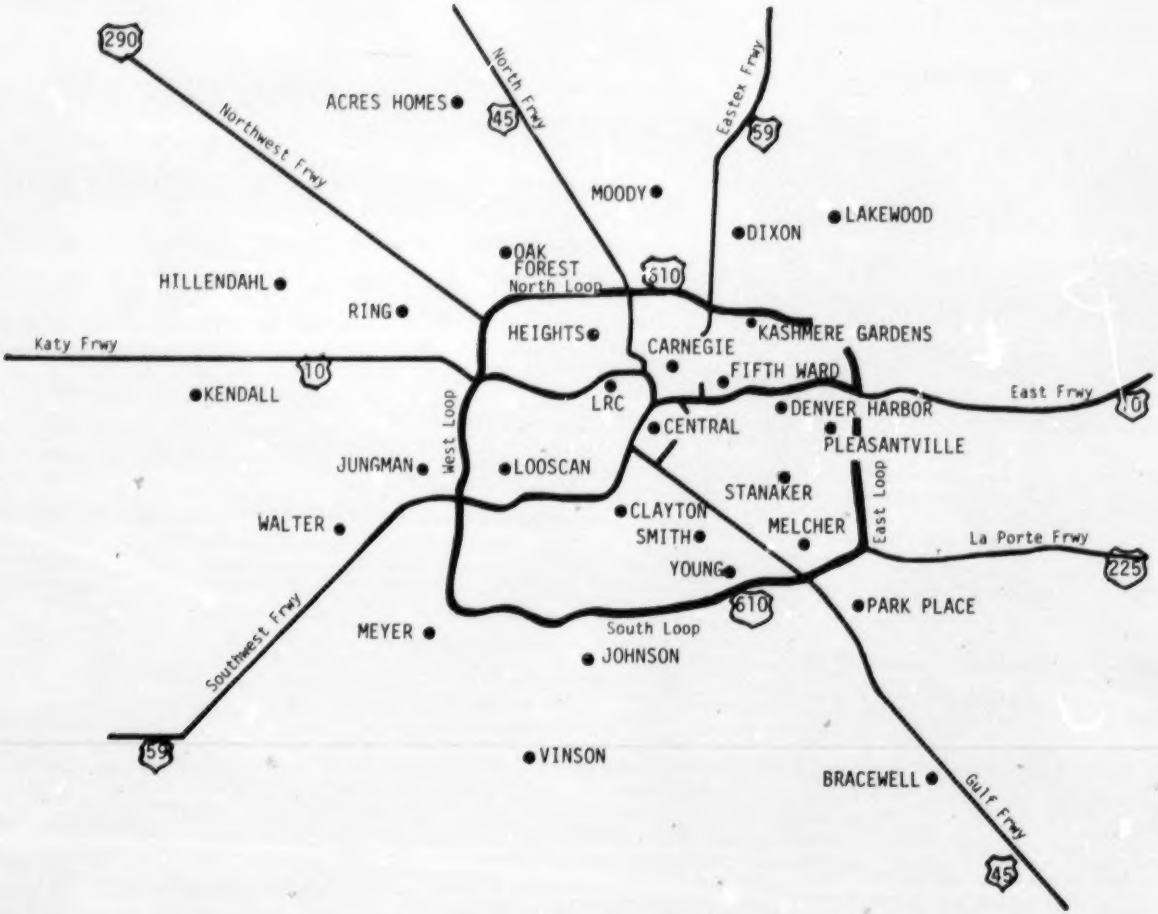
ALLEN PARKWAY VILLAGE
READING & STUDY CENTER
1600 Allen Parkway Village
659-7257, Ext. 64

HESTER HOUSE
READING & STUDY CENTER
2020 Solo Street
674-8769

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
READING & STUDY CENTER
2720 Sampson Street
659-4672

RIPLEY HOUSE
READING & STUDY CENTER
4401 Lovejoy Street
923-1568

THE HOUSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM



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Zona Loomis	Coordinator, Special Projects
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